VISIT…

TOWER IN THE ICE

A Short Adventure for Four 9th-Level Player Characters

CREDITS

Design: Skip Williams
Editing: Penny Williams
Typesetting: Nancy Walker
Cartography: Rob Lazzaretti
Web Production Julia Martin
Web Development: Mark A. Jindra
Graphic Design: Sean Glenn, Cynthia Fliege

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison.

D&D, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, and DUNGEON MASTER are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The d20 logo is a trademark owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

©2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc.
All rights reserved.
Made in the U.S.A.

This product is a work of fiction.
Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.

This Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

For more DUNGEONS & DRAGONS articles, adventures, and information, visit www.wizards.com/dnd

A round building with an impossibly tall, conical roof seemingly rises from a frozen lake. Is this structure as small as it looks, or does more lie hidden beneath the water's icy surface?

Tower in the Ice is a short adventure for four 9th-level characters. The scenario is set in a cold wilderness area that features a frozen lake. The action takes place in a submerged tower that lies largely below the ice. As always, feel free to adapt the material presented here as you see fit to make it work with your campaign.

PREPARATION

You (the DM) need the D&D core rulebooks—the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*—to run this adventure. A copy of *Frostburn* would also be helpful, though it is not necessary to run the adventure. This scenario utilizes the D&D v.3.5 rules.

To get started, print out the adventure. Read through the scenario at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, threats, and major NPCs in the tower (particularly their motivations).

Text that appears in shaded boxes is player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Many centuries ago, an evil ogre mage built a tall tower in an arctic vale. Adventurers eventually defeated him and looted his tower, leaving it empty for decades.

Almost fifty years later, a geological upheaval flooded the vale, submerging all but the tower's uppermost level. Because of the cold temperatures in the area, this new lake soon froze, masking the massive structure beneath the water level. Only its topmost portion still protruded from the ice.

A few years ago, a half-fiend/half-green hag named Puennoki decided that the chilly and flooded tower would be an ideal abode and moved in. Shortly thereafter, she found her soulmate—a half-fiend/half-annis named Chirkka. This horrid pair hopes to locate and recruit a third hag to form a covey. So far, however, they have found only Hoinnia, a tiefling rogue who has recently joined their group.

This loathsome trio has shared several adventures that involved terrorizing the local tribesfolk. The three have managed to exact tribute from these nomadic

hunters in the form of meat, ivory, and the occasional sacrifice.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The characters can approach and enter the tower in any fashion that proves feasible for them, but the most likely point of entry is through the top floor. There the PCs meet Hoinnia, who pretends to welcome them to the abode of a famous a wise woman who is very knowledgeable about arctic birds and other wildlife. Hoinnia invites the PCs to wait while she fetches her employer.

If the PCs agree, the tiefling takes her leave and plunges into the tower's lower levels, where she sounds the alarm. The denizens of the tower then organize a massed attack against the PCs.

If the characters decide to enter the tower via an underwater entrance, or if they detect Hoinnia's ruse, they have a chance to deal with the tower's inhabitants one at a time.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

As DM, you know best how to involve your PCs in an adventure. The tower's odd appearance alone might tempt anyone who sees it to investigate further, but if your players aren't sufficiently curious, you can use one of the following suggestions to draw them into the action.

- The nomads in the area have recently grabbed several travelers and are now ready to deliver them to the hags as tribute. The characters might know the victims, or an interested party might hire them to mount a rescue. When the PCs confront the tribe, the nomads offer to surrender the captives in exchange for the heads of "the three weird sisters" (Puennoki, Chirkka, and Hoinnia), who they believe are powerful sorceresses. The nomads have never seen the hags in their true forms, so the only "sorceress" they can truly describe is Hoinnia. However, they do know where the tower is located.

- Local bards relate tales and legends of an eccentric old woman who lives on an island on a frozen lake. This person is reputed to be an avid ornithologist who will pay generously for any unusual avian specimens that anyone cares to bring. (Puennoki is indeed an avid collector of birds, and she's glad to get new ones. She also loves to eat the people who provide them.) Someone might hire the PCs to deliver a bird and bring back the payment, or perhaps the party finds a rare specimen and then hears the tale in town.

- The ogre mage who first built the tower was infamous for stealing a powerful, good-aligned magic weapon. He was unwilling to destroy the valuable sword, so he kept it as a trophy. Legends say the sword remains concealed in the tower to this very day. The tales might be completely wrong, or perhaps the sword really is somewhere in the tower. Puennoki might have it hidden in her treasure cache (see area 7), or she and her allies might be unaware of its existence. Perhaps the sword lies hidden in a secret niche in the study (area 1), or in one of the armories (area 16).

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

Tower in the Ice is a site-based adventure in which the action occurs inside the ice-locked tower of Puennoki and friends. It begins as soon as the PCs approach the tower.

THE TOWER AND ENVIRONS

The tower rises from the bed of a frozen lake or a shallow arm of the sea. It can be located in any frigid wilderness location. The area might be frozen year round, or perhaps winter merely reigns at the time the PCs are visiting the place.

In either case, the area around the tower is bitterly cold. A character must have a cold-weather outfit (see page 131 in the *Player's Handbook*) to be fully protected against the cold weather. A furred animal is considered to have partial protection.

Daytime temperatures hover around –20° Fahrenheit, and each unprotected character must succeed on a Fortitude save every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. A partially protected character need check only once per hour. At night, the temperatures drop at least 10 degrees. Though the air feels colder, the lower temperature doesn't pose any additional danger to characters.

The water surrounding (and flooding) the tower is even colder than the air. An unprotected character takes 1d6 points of cold damage per 10 minutes (no

save) while submerged and must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage as well. Anyone wearing metal armor or in contact with very cold metal is affected as if by a *chill metal* spell. A partially protected character takes the same damage and makes the same saving throws as an unprotected character, but only once per hour instead of every 10 minutes. An *endure elements* spell or cold resistance of at least 5 provides protection against the cold water. A cold-weather outfit offers partial protection, but only for the first 10 minutes of exposure if it isn't waterproof.

UNDERWATER ADVENTURING

Because four of the tower's five levels are completely flooded, reviewing the material on underwater combat (pages 92 and 93 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) is extremely helpful for running this adventure. Characters must typically swim to get around on the flooded levels. Within the tower, the water is calm, and a character can move by making a DC 10 Swim check. Success allows him to swim at one-quarter of his land speed as a move action or at one-half his land speed as a full-round action. Creatures without swim speeds can charge while swimming (provided they can move at least 10 feet before attacking), but they cannot run, withdraw, or take a 5-foot step while swimming.

A creature that carries sufficient weight to hold it down can also simply walk along the tower's floors if desired. The items carried for this purpose must be nonbulky and nonbuoyant. The amount of weight required depends on the character's size, according to the following table.

Size	Weight Required
Fine	1 lb.
Diminutive	2 lb.
Tiny	4 lb.
Small	8 lb.
Medium	16 lb.
Large	32 lb.
Huge	64 lb.
Gargantuan	128 lb.
Colossal	256 lb.

When a creature walks underwater, its movement is hampered. Unless it has a swim speed, it pays at least 10 feet of movement instead of the usual 5 feet to enter a square. When moving diagonally into a square where movement is hampered, it must pay at least 15 feet of movement. A creature cannot charge, run, or take a 5-foot step while its movement is hampered.

In addition, creatures need some way to breathe while underwater. For player characters, a *water breathing* spell or similar magic is the best bet. The denizens of the tower keep a few *potions of water breathing* in the upper levels for guests (or prisoners) who might need them.

TOWER INTERIOR

The tower is a five-story stone structure, of which only the topmost floor is not flooded. The major features of the structure are as follows.

Walls

All the tower's walls are stone, and the elements haven't been kind to them. The exterior walls protruding above the waterline are heavily weathered. Those underwater are in better shape but covered with aquatic slime.

Exterior Walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 450; break DC 41; Climb DC 15.

Though the interior walls are also covered with slime in the lower four levels, they are in much better condition than the exterior walls.

Interior Walls: 2 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; break DC 37; Climb DC 20.

Any character not carrying a heavy load gains a +8 circumstance bonus on Climb checks made underwater, since her buoyancy makes climbing fairly easy.

Ceilings

The ceilings within the tower are 25 feet high unless otherwise noted in an individual area description.

Floors

All the floors are made of fairly smooth stone. Movement across them is not impeded, but see the notes on underwater adventuring for the effect of water on movement in the lower levels.

Doors

Except for the ones on the lower level, all the tower's doors are made of reinforced wood that has been well preserved against the elements. None of the doors are locked, but most are stuck. Those that are submerged are extremely difficult to open, thanks to swelling wood and extra resistance from the water. Add +5 to the indicated DCs to open or break down doors underwater. The tower residents are familiar with each door's idiosyncrasies, and each "sister" gains a +5 circumstance bonus on Strength checks made to open them.

The residents keep supplies of small rocks on hand to wedge the doors shut in case of attack. Wedging a door requires a full-round action.

Strong Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; open DC 15, break DC 25.

Windows

All the tower's windows are made of crystal-clear leaded glass panes set in a bronze lattice. The lattices are hinged and can be opened like shutters, though they are usually held closed by simple but strong latches. Their mechanisms are somewhat stiff, so each latch requires a DC 10 Strength check to operate. A latch cannot be opened from outside an intact window, but anyone can reach in through a broken window and open its latch. Like the doors, the windows are more difficult to open or break when submerged, and each of the tower residents gains a +5 circumstance bonus on Strength checks made to open them.

On levels 1–3, the windows provide access to the tower interior.

Window Lattices: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 50; open DC 15 (unlatched), break DC 25 (latched).

Glass Window Panes: 1/2 in. thick; hardness 1; hp 2; break DC 7.

Light

None of the areas within the tower are lighted unless otherwise noted.

LEVEL ONE

This level is the topmost floor of the tower, and the only one that's above water. Unlike the other stories, this onw has a conical roof that rises to a height of 50 feet at the center and slopes down to about 20 feet at the outer walls. The whole roof, with its maze of wooden rafters, is open to the level below. The interior walls in this level are only 25 high, so characters can climb or fly over the walls to get from one area to an adjacent one.

APPROACHING THE LEVEL (EL 6)

The windows in the tower's top level are about 15 feet above the lake's frozen surface. The open windows in area 1 are visible from at least 100 yards away.

Trap: Characters walking across the ice find a gap of open water about a foot wide all around the tower. The ice is brittle in this area, and unwary characters might fall into the lake when the ice breaks away underfoot.

Brittle Ice Trap: CR 5, location trigger, no reset, DC 20 Reflex save avoids, Search DC 20; Disable Device DC —. Market Price: —.

Anytime a character weighing 100 pounds or more comes within 10 feet of the gap, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1, the ice crumbles and the character must make a successful DC 20 Reflex save or fall through into the frigid water below. Anyone within 5 feet of the character must also make a Reflex save at the same DC or fall in. Any character weighing 300 pounds or more who comes within 5 feet of the gap automatically breaks through the ice. A DC 15 Survival or Search check reveals that the ice near the gap is unstable.

Development: The denizens of the tower might spot characters approaching from the east, west, or northeast. See the Tactics sections of areas 1, 2, and 3 for details.

1. SUNSET CHAMBER (EL 8–10)

This area once served as a study and library, but these days it's just a guardpost.

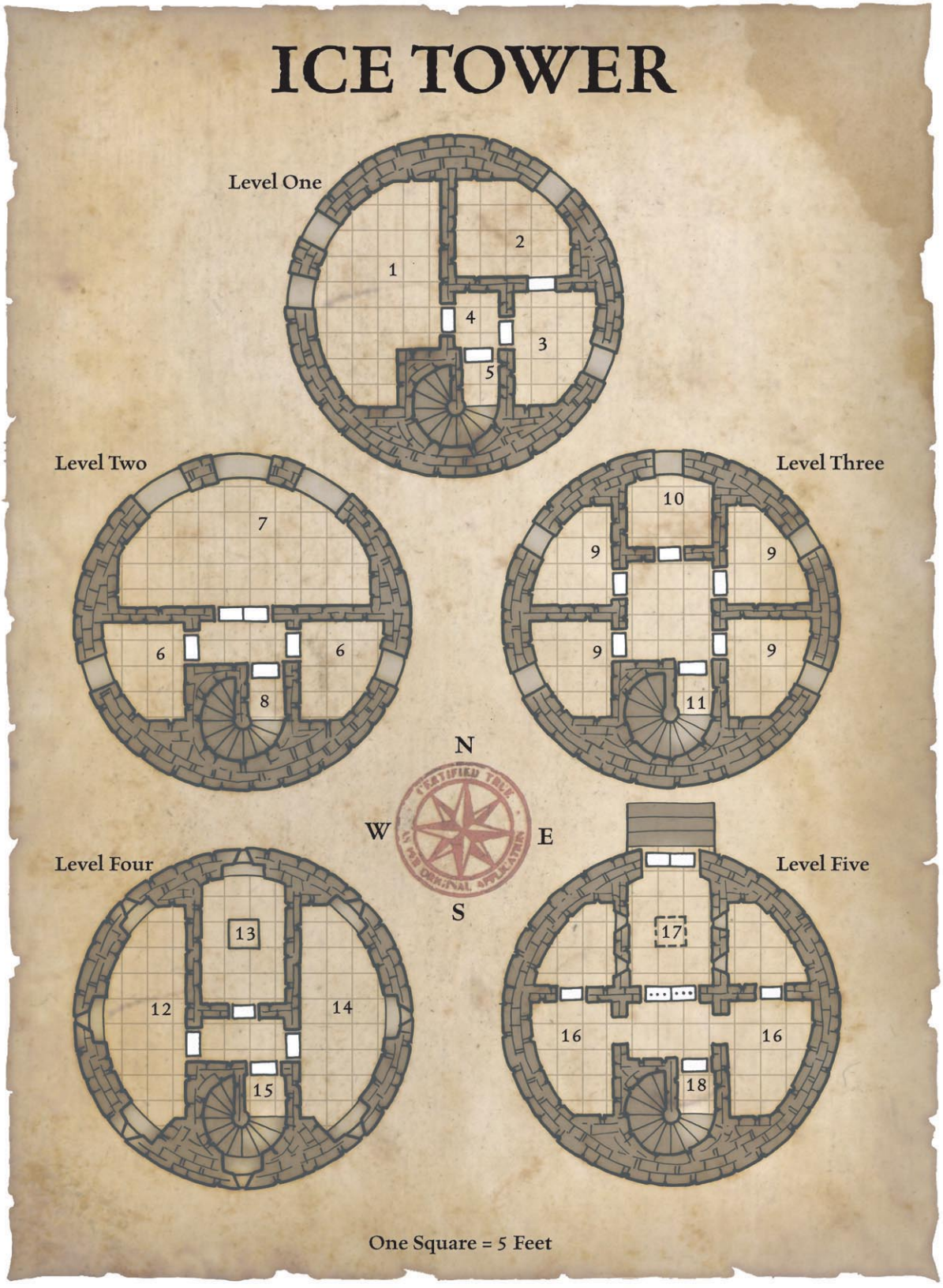
> This semicircular chamber has an open ceiling, and the frigid wind blowing through the open windows has created a rime of frost on the exposed rafters. Empty shelves line the east wall, stretching from the floor as far up as a giant could reach. Above them is an open space. A battered wooden table about chin high to a human and a few threadbare chairs big enough to seat ogres complete the décor.

Creatures: Either Hoinnia (see Adventure Background) or a pair of ettin guards keeps watch here at all times (50% chance that either is present). When not on watch here, Hoinnia is in her room (area 2), and the ettins are in their barracks (area 3).

Hoinnia has scaly skin, wicked-looking eyes, and two small horns protruding from her forehead. She wears a hood that conceals the horns, but her overall appearance should alert the PCs to her otherworldly nature. A DC 10 Knowledge (the planes) check reveals that she is a tiefling.

Hoinnia: Female tiefling rogue 7; CR 7; Medium outsider (native); HD 7d6+7; hp 31; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk or Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+3/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +10 ranged (1d6+3/×3, *+1 composite shortbow* [+2 Str bonus]); SA *darkness*, sneak attack +4d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., resistances (cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5), trap sense +2, trapfinding, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6.

ICE TOWER


Level One
1
2
3
4
5
Level Two
6
6
7
8
Level Three
9
9
9
9
10
11
N
W
E
S
Level Four
12
13
14
15
Level Five
16
16
17
18
One Square = 5 Feet

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +2, Escape Artist +13, Hide +15, Intimidate +0, Jump +4, Listen +10, Move Silently +13, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +15, Swim +11, Tumble +13; Blind-Fight, Dodge, Weapon Finesse.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Infernal.

Darkness (Sp): Hoinnia can use *darkness* (caster level 7th) once per day.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Hoinnia deals 4d6 extra points of damage on any successful attack against flat-footed or flanked targets, or against a target that has been denied its Dexterity bonus for any reason. This damage also applies to ranged attacks against targets up to 30 feet away. Creatures with concealment, creatures without discernible anatomies, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are all immune to sneak attacks. Hoinnia may choose to deliver nonlethal damage with her sneak attack, but only when using a weapon designed for that purpose, such as a sap (blackjack).

Evasion (Ex): If Hoinnia is exposed to any effect that normally allows her to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, she takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Trapfinding (Ex): Hoinnia can find, disarm, or bypass traps with a DC of 20 or higher. She can use the Search skill to find, and the Disable Device skill to disarm, magic traps (DC 25 + the level of the spell used to create it). If her Disable Device result exceeds the trap's DC by 10 or more, she discovers how to bypass the trap without triggering or disarming it.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Hoinnia retains her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or targeted by an unseen foe (she still loses her Dexterity bonus if paralyzed or otherwise immobile).

Possessions: +1 mithral chain shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1, masterwork rapier, *+1 composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus) with 20 arrows, *potion of cat's grace, 2 potions of cure light wounds.*

Ettins (2): hp 65 each; see *Monster Manual,* page 106. Both ettins wear cold-weather outfits under their armor.

Tactics: Both Hoinnia and the ettins keep watch out the chamber's open windows while on duty here. If the ettins see anyone approaching, one of them runs to area 2 to fetch Hoinnia while the other blocks one of the windows. The ettins have orders to let visitors approach, so the ettin remaining in the room just stares dumbly at the PCs until attacked or until Hoinnia arrives.

While standing in the window, the ettin has cover (+4 to AC). If attacked, he throws javelins or swings clubs. If the foes are beyond both melee reach and javelin range, he is smart enough to close and latch the windows, then move to area 4 and wedge the door shut.

If Hoinnia sees anyone approaching while she is on guard, or when she is summoned to the room, she greets the newcomers in Common, asking if they have brought something for her mistress. No matter what the reply, she invites the visitors in, though she makes no attempt to help them enter the tower.

If a fight breaks out in this chamber, the ettin guard in area 3 joins the fray after 2 rounds. If Hoinnia is here, she slips away to area 2 as soon as she can and makes a quiet investigation, as noted in the Development section of that entry.

In a fight, Hoinnia uses her Tumble skill to stay away from dangerous foes and to set up sneak attacks when possible. She holds off invaders until the ettin guards can arrive from area 3, then uses her Tumble skill to disengage. Once clear of the fight, she swims down to area 7 on level 2 or area 10 on level 3 to get Puennoki, using her *darkness* ability to deter pursuit if necessary. Hoinnia receives *water breathing* spells from Puennoki every few hours, so she usually doesn't have to worry about breathing on the tower's lower levels. If she loses her *water breathing* to a *dispel magic* effect, she goes to her room (area 2) and quaffs one of the *potions of water breathing* hidden there before leaving this level.

Development: The windows in this chamber give anyone inside a fairly clear view to the west. The sentries have no difficulty spotting visible creatures approaching the tower from that direction.

If the PCs enter the tower peacefully, Hoinnia chats with them for a while. If they seem to distrust her because of her otherworldly characteristics, Hoinnia warns them that they ought not to judge others by their appearances. Hoinnia's visage reflects her nature fairly accurately, but she's pretty good at bluffing. A particularly suspicious PC can make a Sense Motive check (opposed by Hoinnia's Sense Motive check). To a character who loses the check, Hoinnia seems credible. One who wins, however, realizes that she is just as nasty as she looks, and that she is probably just stringing the visitors along until she can set them up for a fight.

If the PCs converse with Hoinnia for any length of time without attacking, she acknowledges that her employer is a wise woman, and that she is very knowledgeable about birds and other avian creatures. During the conversation, Hoinnia uses her Sense Motive skill

to get a general idea of the characters' purpose in visiting the tower.

If she suspects that the PCs are invaders, she launches a quick attack, hoping to catch her foes off guard and make a sneak attack. Then she shouts for reinforcements. Hoinnia doesn't speak Giant, so she can't give detailed orders to the ettins, but they understand her tone. When she can, she breaks away from the fight and goes to find Puennoki, as noted in the Tactics section above.

If Hoinnia thinks the PCs are fairly harmless, she invites them to make themselves as comfortable as they can, then goes to find Puennoki. Before leaving the room, she warns the visitors not to leave this chamber, claiming that the tower is old and rickety and not at all safe for people who aren't accustomed to its quirks. Her admonition does contain an element of truth, but she really just wants to discourage the PCs from poking around the tower while she's gone.

If the ettins are on guard here and fight breaks out in area 2 or 3, one ettin checks out the disturbance after 2 rounds, and the second ettin follows in another 2 rounds if the first one does not return.

2. HOINNIA'S CHAMBER (EL 0 OR 8)

This area was once a sitting room, but now it serves as Hoinnia's bedchamber.

> This chamber is comfortably warm, a blue haze with a faintly sulfurous odor fills the air. A brazier filled with smoldering coals seems to be the source of this effect. Next to the brazier stands a wooden crate filled with brownish coal.
>
> The room is roughly square and has a single window. Some kind of sagging canvas trap forms a ceiling of sorts that hangs perhaps 20 feet above the floor. A few furs serve as rugs, and a bed heaped with more furs stands against the west wall. A wardrobe made of rough planks and a footstool round out the furnishings.

The crate contains about 100 pounds of lignite, a soft brown coal that burns with a smoky flame. Hoinnia is cold resistant, but she doesn't like to feel chilly, so she keeps a low fire going in this room all the time. She has draped a big piece of canvas overhead to help hold in the heat. If the PCs can reach it, they can easily tear it away, revealing the rafters and the roof above (see Tower Interior for details).

The wardrobe contains normal clothing and a few odd bits of adventuring gear, including a 100-foot coil of hemp rope and a steel mirror.

Creatures: Hoinnia is here 50% of the time. When she's not here, she's keeping watch in area 1.

Hoinnia: hp 31; see area 1 for statistics.

Tactics: When Hoinnia is in this room, she spends most of her time either dozing in bed or gazing out the window (50% chance for each). If she's looking out the window, she spots any visible characters approaching the tower from the northeast. Otherwise, she uses the tactics noted for her in area 1.

Development: Any loud noise in this chamber brings the guards from area 3 in 1 round and one guard from area 1 in 2 rounds. The remaining guard follows from area 1 after 2 more rounds if the first guard does not return.

If Hoinnia is here and a fight breaks out in area 1 or 3, she quietly climbs the wall and peers into the next chamber to see what's happening. Any PC who might see or hear her should make a Spot check opposed by Hoinnia's Hide check and a Listen check opposed by her Move Silently check. Once Hoinnia has assessed the situation, she either fetches Puennoki from area 7 or 10 immediately, or joins the fray for a round or two before going to get the hag. Usually, she doesn't use the latter option unless the intruders notice her or she gets a chance to make a sneak attack. In a fight, she uses the tactics noted for her in area 1.

Treasure: Some of the furs on the bed are valuable, though they are none too clean. A DC 15 Search or Appraise check reveals three salable furs, each worth 150 gp. In addition, a stone coffer buried in the brazier holds four *portions of water breathing*, which are protected from the heat by the thick walls of their container. Dumping out the contents of the brazier automatically reveals the box, or a character probing inside the brazier can attempt a DC 25 Search check to locate it. Any character digging through the burning coals or handling the box takes 1d4 points of fire damage each round that he remains in contact with it. If the PCs dump the brazier, the whole mess cools down in 10 minutes.

3. BARRACKS (EL 6–10)

This former bedchamber now serves as a barracks for three ettins that the "sisters" keep here to guard the complex. The chamber looks much like area 2, except that it has no canvas ceiling, and its only furnishings are a crude wooden table with two equally crude benches. Crowded into the room's south end are two big piles of moss that serve as beds for the ettins.

Creatures: Three ettins live in this chamber, but all three of them are present only 50% of the time. The

rest of the time, one ettin is here and the other two are on guard duty in area 1.

Ettins (1 or 3): hp 65 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 106. The ettins wear cold-weather outfits under their armor.

Tactics: Like Hoinnia in area 2, a lone ettin alternately dozes and keeps watch out the window to the east. If she sees visitors or is attacked, she calls Hoinnia. The tiefling can't understand the ettin's speech, but she knows when the creature is trying to call her. If all three ettins are here, two of them doze while the third watches out the window. Otherwise, the ettins use the tactics described in area 1.

Development: If only one ettin is here, any loud noise from this chamber brings one ettin from area 1 in 2 rounds, and the second 2 rounds later if the first fails to return. In addition, any disturbance in this chamber brings an immediate reaction from Hoinnia if she's in area 2, as noted in the Development section for that entry.

4. HALL

This long chamber is usually empty, though an ettin might try to block it off, as noted in the area 1 entry.

5. STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase in this chamber descends 30 feet to area 8 on level 2.

LEVELS TWO TO FIVE

The lower levels of the tower are flooded. The water level is located about 5 feet down the stairs that lead down from area 5 on level 1. A thin rime of ice covers the surface of the water, but the PCs can break through it easily.

6. SERGEANTS' CHAMBERS (EL 8)

These two rooms serve as bedchambers for the underwater denizens of the tower. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter.

> Along the south wall of this chamber hangs a massive net with many layers and folds. Anchored as it is to both floor and ceiling, it resembles an old cobweb. Nearby stands a waterlogged wooden table, and beside it are two smooth rocks with concave tops. A stone box has been pushed up against the north wall.

The net serves as a bed for the occupant of this room, the rocks serve as chairs, and the stone box functions as a trunk. This last item contains a few articles of ogre-sized clothing (none of them in good repair), plus two bundles of crossbow bolts (10 each), a whetstone, and some spare netting.

Creatures: One fiendish merrow warrior lives in each of these chambers. At any given time, one of these sergeants is in his room, and the other is on guard in area 7.

Tactics: The merrows keep their windows closed but unlatched while in their rooms. In a fight, the occupant of either chamber raps the floor with the butt of his longspear (a free action) and then stabs at any foe within reach, using his smite good ability with his first attack. If reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, the merrow swims out the window and proceeds to area 7, where he grabs the hidden loot. Unless he thinks he has a great deal of time, he doesn't bother with the coins; he simply snatches the jewels and leaves. If pursued from this room, he turns and fights to the death.

Development: The merrows rap on the floor to alert whoever is in area 7, as well as the guards in area 9 on the level below. See the Development sections in those entries for details.

If summoned to area 7 by a tap on the wall, the merrow first taps on the floor, then swims out the window to area 7 to survey the situation there. On the way, he drinks his *potion of haste* and *potion of bull's strength*.

Sergeants (2): Male fiendish merrow warrior 3; CR 6; Large giant (aquatic, extraplanar); HD 7d8+17; hp 48; Init –1; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk +12 (1d8+8/×3, *+1 longspear*) or +11 melee (1d4+5/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +5 ranged (1d10/19–20, masterwork heavy crossbow); Full Atk +12/+7 (1d8+8/×3, *+1 longspear*) or +11/+6 melee (1d4+5/19–20, masterwork dagger) or +5 ranged (1d10/19–20, masterwork heavy crossbow); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA smite good; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, resistances (cold 5, fire 5), spell resistance 12; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Hide –7, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +12; Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a fiendish merrow warrior can make a normal melee attack and deal an extra +7 points of damage against a good foe.

Possessions: +1 hide armor, +1 longspear, masterwork dagger, masterwork heavy crossbow with 10 bolts,

potion of bull's strength, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of cure light wounds, potion of haste.

7. GALLERY (EL 6 OR 9)

A bizarre sight awaits the characters in this chamber. Read or paraphrase the following when they arrive.

> This big, semicircular chamber has a bank of three windows along its curving north wall. The interior is choked with dozens—if not hundreds—of blocks of clear ice that float above the floor on thin tethers. Each block contains some kind of bird. The variety represented here is nothing short of astounding—from miniscule hummingbirds floating in fist-sized blocks to great eagles in blocks as big as a horse. The whole mass looks like some sort of macabre underwater forest.

The preserved birds are the specimens that Puennoki has collected over the years. She's no taxidermist, so she simply freezes them. The collection has some value to a scholar, but the specimens rapidly decompose if allowed to thaw.

Creatures: A merrow warrior always stands watch in here (see area 6 for statistics). In addition, Puennoki herself has a 25% chance to be here, gazing at her collection of frozen birds.

Merrow: hp 48; see area 6 for statistics.

Puennoki: hp 58; see area 10 for statistics.

Tactics: The merrows keep one of the room's windows (usually the one closest to the off-duty merrow in area 6) closed but unlatched. If confronted here alone, the merrow guard taps on the wall to alert his off-duty comrade, then stabs at the nearest foe using his smite good ability. The merrow keeps fighting until help arrives, then disengages long enough to quaff a potion or two before rejoining the fight. Throughout the battle, the merrow tries to use his swim speed and reach to stay away from dangerous foes. He is smart enough to aim his attacks at spellcasters or foes who with ranged attacks whenever possible.

If Puennoki is in here, she uses the tactics noted for her in area 10. While she is alive, any merrows here fight to the death. If Puennoki is slain, the merrows flee,

Development: A fight in here draws the merrow from area 6 after 2 rounds and those in area 9 after 4 rounds. If Puennoki isn't already here, she joins the merrows coming from area 9.

Treasure: A loose stone near the center of the floor conceals a niche (DC 25 Search check) crammed with some ordinary loot that Puennoki and her minions have managed to gather. Inside are 800 gp, 320 pp, 16 lapis lazuli gems (worth 10 gp each), 7 peridots (worth 50 gp each), 19 golden pearls (worth 100 gp each), 3 black pearls (worth 500 gp each), and an ivory choker with gold fittings (worth 90 gp).

8. STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase in this area rises 30 feet to area 5 on level l. It also descends 30 feet to area 11 on level 3.

9. BARRACKS (EL 10)

These four chambers resemble area 6, except that each contains three sleeping nets.

Creatures: Three fiendish merrow guards live in each chamber, though only two of each group are present at any given time. The remaining merrows are on duty in area 16 on level 5.

Guards (8): Male and female fiendish merrow; CR 4; Large giant (aquatic, extraplanar); HD 4d8+11; hp 29; Init –1; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +12; Atk or Full Atk +8 (1d8+7/×3, longspear) or +7 melee (1d4+5/19–20, dagger) or +1 ranged (1d10/19–20, heavy crossbow); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, resistances (cold 5, fire 5), spell resistance 9; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Hide –7, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +9; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a fiendish merrow can make a normal melee attack and deal an extra +4 points of damage against a good foe.

Possessions: Masterwork hide armor, longspear, dagger, heavy crossbow with 10 bolts.

Tactics: In a fight, the guards use their smite good ability as quickly as they can. They generally attack the closest foe unless a sergeant, Puennoki, or Chirkka orders them to do otherwise.

Development: The guards quickly notice any fighting on this level or on the levels above or below it. (Even if their comrades don't alert them by thumping on the floors or ceilings, sound carries very well through stone and water.) After a round or two, the guards gather up their weapons and head for the scene of the action. One of them, however, takes the time to alert Puennoki in area 10 (if she's there) or goes up to area 7 to fetch her. Likewise, when Puennoki is in area 10, she notices any fighting in the barracks. When heading for a fight, the guards usually use the stairwell

(area 11), but they may also swim through windows of the appropriate size if the target level has any.

10. PUENNOKI'S ROOM (EL 8)

This chamber has a macabre décor that befits its occupant. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter.

> This cramped chamber resembles an underwater charnel house. Niches in the walls are crammed with a vast array of skulls, both humanoid and monstrous. A cocoonlike net hangs in front of the single window, and a collection of femurs and vertebrae dangle from it like windblown leaves caught in an old spiderweb. Balloonlike chunks of ice, each containing a bird or small animal, float above the floor.

The bones in here are all trophies from Puennoki's combat victories over the years. The birds and other animals packed in ice are recent additions to her collection that she has not yet added to the gallery (area 7).

Creatures: Puennoki is here 75% of the time, gazing at her trophies and laying plans for collecting more. The rest of the time, she's in area 7 enjoying the trophies she has stashed there.

Puennoki: Female half-fiend/half-green hag; CR 7; Medium outsider (augmented monstrous humanoid, native); HD 9d8+18; hp 58; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +14; Atk +14 melee (1d4+5, claw); Full Atk +14 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +9 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA mimicry, smite good, spell-like abilities, weakness; SQ damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 90 ft., immunity to poison, outsider traits, resistances (acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10), spell resistance 19; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +12, Heal +7, Hide +14, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +15, Spot +15, Survival +7, Swim +13; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude.

Languages: Abyssal, Aquan, Common, Draconic, Giant, Infernal.

Mimicry (Ex): Puennoki can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near her lair.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Puennoki can make a normal melee attack and deal an extra +9 points of damage against a good foe.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*dancing lights, disguise self, ghost sound* (DC 15), *invisibility, pass without trace, tongues, water breathing*; 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 18); 1/day contagion (DC 17), *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster level 9th.

Weakness (Su): Puennoki can weaken a foe by making a special touch attack (+14 touch). The opponent must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage.

Outsider Traits: Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected (though a wish or miracle spell can restore life).

Possessions: Potion of cure serious wounds, 2 potions of cure light wounds, potion of bull's strength, potion of haste, 2 potions of nondetection.

Tactics: If Puennoki has time to prepare for a fight (as she will if she is summoned to a battle elsewhere in the tower), she drinks a *potion of nondetection* (and possibly her *potion of bull's strength* if she thinks the threat merits it), then casts *invisibility* on herself and on one or two allies. Everyone can see the location of an invisible creature underwater because of the visible bubble it leaves, but it still has concealment (20% miss chance).

Upon entering a fight, Puennoki uses *unholy blight* on as many foes as possible, then selects the most dangerous-looking fighter-type among the enemies and concentrates her weakness attacks on them. Once she has weakened a character or two, she uses smite good on the most formidable remaining foe, followed by a claw attack in conjunction with her *contagion* ability. When she makes this attack, she must hit the target's normal Armor Class. If she hits, she deals claw damage and delivers the *contagion* effect. If she misses, she deals no damage but still holds the *contagion* effect, which she can try to deliver again the next round.

Development: Like the merrows in area 9, Puennoki quickly notices any fighting on this level or on the ones above or below. In addition, creatures from level 1 or level 5 might come here to confront visitors. If the newcomers are hostile, Puennoki loses no time in attacking them. But if Hoinnia or Chirkka has managed to keep them off guard, Puennoki uses her *disguise self* ability to pose as a harmless old crank, then greets the visitors personally. She takes a few rounds to size up the opposition, then tries to attack and eliminate the most dangerous member of the opposing party. In any case, Puennoki sends a merrow to area 1 or 13 to get Chirkka or Hoinnia (or both) and bring them to the scene of the confrontation.

11. STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase in this area rises 30 feet to area 8 on level 2. It also descends 30 feet to area 15 on level 4.

12. KITCHEN

Puennoki and her minions use this chamber to prepare food. Since they're none too clean about it, however, the room's condition isn't any too appetizing.

> The water in this chamber has a faint red tint, and it looks as murky as a mud puddle. Bits and pieces of entrails, flesh, and bone rest on every surface. The only furniture is a sturdy-looking wooden table. Amid the trash on its surface lies a scattered collection of bronze knives.

No one is in this chamber when the PCs arrive.

Treasure: The bronze knives are fairly old, and the entire set is worth 100 gp to a collector.

13. CHIRKKA'S ROOM (EL 8)

As with area 10, this room's contents fit its occupant.

> An odd-looking dome of oiled leather fills most of this chamber. The mass looks something like a tent, except that a big net lashed to some rings in the floor seems hold it in place. The whole dome seems to strain upward against the net.

Puennoki and her minions fitted the leather dome over an opening in the floor that connects with area 17 on level 5. Then they carried leather bladders full of air into area 17 until it was completely filled with air. The dome keeps the air that now fills area 17 from escaping through the connecting hole.

The air bubble under the leather dome has an oily surface that forms a fairly stable air-water interface, so characters can enter or exit the bubble without disturbing the arrangement. If, however, anyone cuts away the net or slashes open the leather dome, the air bubble bursts, creating a hurricane-force wind that flows from the hole in the floor, swirls clockwise around the room, and blasts out the arrow slit in the north wall. The airflow lasts for 1 round, during which characters in the room suffer the appropriate wind effects, as noted on page 95 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

An opening in the net and the leather gives access to the air-filled space beneath the leather dome, which contains a trunk and a three-legged stool.

Leather Dome: 1 in. thick; hardness 2; hp 5; break DC 18.

Net: 1 in. thick; hardness 0; hp 2; break DC 23.

Creatures: Chirkka, Puennoki's chief ally, spends most of her time under the dome. She receives *water breathing* effects from Puennoki every few hours, but she prefers dry land to underwater living.

Chirkka: Female half-fiend/half-annis; CR 8; Large outsider (augmented monstrous humanoid, natve); HD 7d8+21; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +7; Grp +20; Atk +15 melee (1d6+9, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d6+9, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d8+4, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, rake 1d6+9, rend 2d6+10, smite good, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 2/bludgeoning and 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, outsider traits, resistances (acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fre 10), spell resistance 19; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 29, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +15, Hide +9, Intimidate +3, Jump +25, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +13, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +13, Swim +14, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude.

Languages: Aquan, Common, Giant, Infernal.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Chirkka must hit a Large or smaller opponent with a claw attack. She can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +15 melee, damage 1d6+9. Chirkka can attack a grappled foe with both claws at no penalty.

Rend (Ex): If Chirkka hits with both claw attacks she latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d6+13 points of damage.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Chirkka can make a normal melee attack and deal an extra +7 points of damage against a good foe.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*disguise self, fog cloud*. Caster level 8th. 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 15); 1/day *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 15). Caster level 7th.

Outsider Traits: Darkvision 60 ft.; cannot be raised or resurrected (though a wish or miracle spell can restore life).

Possessions: Bracers of armor +1, ring of protection +1, potion of cure moderate wounds, 2 potions of cure light wounds.

Tactics: In battle, Chirkka uses much the same tactics as Puennoki does (see area 10), though she has neither *contagion* nor a weakness ability. Instead, she

uses *unholy blight*, then tries to use improved grab or rend against a fighter-type, choosing a different target than Puennoki if the latter is present.

Development: Chirkka quickly notices any fighting on this level or on the ones above or below it. Puennoki sends a guard here to fetch Chirkka when she goes to join a fight or meet visitors (see the Development section in area 10).

Any disturbance in this chamber alerts the sentries in area 16 on level 5.

14. PANTRY

This room is packed with frozen fish and game, mostly whole, that is kept in place by nets.

15. STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase in this chamber rises 30 feet to area 11 on level 2. It also descends 30 feet to area 18 on level 5.

16. GUARDPOSTS

These two areas once served as armories. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs arrive.

> This area contains a rickety-looking wooden frame fitted with many slots and hooks. It may once have been intended to hold tools or weapons, but it's empty now.

Creatures: Two fiendish merrows lurk behind the empty weapon racks (see area 9 for their tactics). Puennoki has stationed them here to keep an eye on area 17.

Fiendish Merrows (2): hp 29; see area 9 for statistics.

Development: The merrows are well aware of the dangers that area 17 could pose if anyone tampers with it. Should the air inside be released, they hold on for dear life until the rush of water stops, then attack any survivors. The merrows also notice disturbances in area 13 and immediately move to join any fighting there.

17. ENTRY

Puennoki and her allies have filled this chamber with air, creating a bubble that extends through a hole in the ceiling and into area 13 (see area 13 for details). The arrow slits in this chamber have been blocked to keep the air inside.

The two pairs of double doors leading out of this area are made of bronze, and their hinges are hidden inside the surrounding stonework. Both sets open outward from the room. Because this chamber is filled with air, the tremendous pressure of the surrounding water holds the doors firmly closed. If the PCs manage to open either set of doors, or simply break them open, tons of water rush into the room, blowing out the other set of doors in the process. Any creature in area 16, or outside the tower and within 50 feet of this room, must make a DC 35 Strength check or a DC 25 Swim check or be dragged along with the flow, taking 6d6 points of damage. Each of the merrows in area 16 gains a +20 bonus on the check.

Bronze Doors: 3 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; open DC 120, break DC 30.

18. STAIRWELL

The spiral staircase in this chamber rises 30 feet to area 15 on level 4.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure isn't over until the PCs slay or drive off both Puennoki and Chirkka. After the two hags have been defeated, their troops quickly desert the tower.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

The defeat of Puennoki and Chirkka creates a power vacuum in the surrounding area. Eventually, however, another monster or group of monsters might move into the tower and take up where the two hags left off. A white dragon or one of the monsters featured in the new *Frostburn* book would make a good tenant for the tower.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Skip Williams keeps busy with freelance projects for several different game companies, and he served as the sage of *Dragon Magazine* for eighteen years. Skip is a codesigner of the D&D 3rd edition game and the chief architect of the *Monster Manual*. When not devising swift and cruel deaths for player characters, Skip putters in his kitchen or garden (rabbits and deer are not his friends) or works on repairing and improving the century-old farmhouse that he shares with his wife, Penny, and a growing menagerie of pets.